STATE DOCUMENTS

Montana. Governor, 1913-1920

Message of Governor S.V. Stewart

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Governor's Message.

Mr. President and Members of the Thirteenth Legislative Assembly:

The laws of Montana require that the Governor submit to you at this time such information and recommendations as he may deem pertinent. The same Constitution and Statutes define the respective functions of the three branches of the government. The chief present concern, therefore, involves an intelligent understanding not alone of the legal duty but as well of the official and personal obligation imposed thereby.

No one of us was elected to office as a personal compliment or as a means of affording a holiday. Public office may or may not prove pleasant and satisfactory to the individual, but it should always carry serious responsibility. The truest and most enduring satisfaction to be derived from official life must ever result from calm and serene contemplation of a work completed and well done rather than from careless ease and comfort in office.

The Thirteenth Legislative Assembly may and should make a record for efficiency that will compare most favorably with any past session. To do this two things are essential and should at all times be kept in mind:

First: A clear understanding of the finances of the State and a consistent application of that knowledge in making appropriations;

Second: A full realization of the fact that the people who sent us here as their representatives have declared at the polls in no unmistakable terms that certain reforms must be forthcoming.

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CARE IN APPROPRIATIONS.

Our State is rich in resources but not in ready money. Our institutions are building and need cash. However laudable may be the ambition and desire to speedily complete and equip them and thereby enlarge the immediate scope of their influence, we must face the fact that there is only a limited sum available. Care must be exercised in all matters touching ap-

propriations. It is the duty of every member to carefully study the various financial statements submitted.

A contract exists today between the people on the one side and the present administration on the other. We made a proposal, either personally or through the medium of the platform of principles upon which we stood for office, that if successful we would enact certain measures of proposed legislation. The people accepted the proposition. The minds met and there was a complete contract. Its terms are plain, specific and entirely possible of execution. Nothing now remains to prevent our living up to each obligation thereof. A failure to give to the people the promised reforms can be nothing short of repudiation. Our duty, therefore, is evident, although it may not be performed without much studious effort.

My part is to recommend and approve. The former I do most emphatically, and the latter I stand ready to cheerfully perform. You are now face to foce with **your** covenant of the contract. Prompt and effective fulfillment is confidently expected.

SUBJECTS OF LEGISLATION.

The reforms which the people demand were promises not only by the majority party, but were included in the platform declarations and pledges of all three of the political parties represented in the membership of this Assembly, and include the following:

A law providing for a Tax Commission with full power to adjust and equalize the assessment of property. This may be accomplished by the enlargement of the powers of the present Board of Equalization; by the creation of a new Board; or the power may be vested in some Board already in existence. The former seems the more feasible.

A Public Service Commission law. The business of public service corporations operating in Montana should be regulated. The present Board of Railroad Commissioners can do this work and thereby obviate the necessity for and expense of a new Commission.

A new highway law. Road construction and repair are important to all classes. The present law was never satisfactory or adequate. The growth and settlement of the State have made action in this regard seem imperative.

A law relative to forests. Disastrous fires have demonstrated the necessity for measures of protection and prevention.

A law defining the liability of employers and regulating the compensation of employes for accidents received in the course of employment. Our method of dealing with such cases is satisfactory to no one. A new and comprehensive law on this subject will benefit the employer, the employe and the taxpayer.

SUPERVISION OF INVESTMENT COMPANIES.

A law providing for the supervision of all investment companies and promotion enterprises in the State. We have legitimate resources in this State sufficient to warrant the capitalization of all of the companies that are required. Outside fake promotion schemes should be excluded. We should welcome all legitimate business, domestic or foreign, and a "blue sky" law of fair intent will not interfere with the business of such concerns.

A law regulating the apportionment and use of water for power purposes. Such a law will not only protect the present generation but will conserve for the future.

A law authorizing the Governor to submit bills for the consideration of the Legislative Assembly, and, if rejected by that body, to refer any such bills to the voters for their approval or rejection; and also permitting the Assembly to make reference to bills vetoed by the Governor.

A law providing for the appointment of a Dairy Commissioner. The work of this Commissioner should be done under the auspices of the Agricultural College. It is an important matter and will affect the success of an increasingly-important branch of business, in addition to the protection to be afforded the general public in insuring clean food products.

A law providing for the levy of a direct tax for the support of each of the State educational institutions. In my opinion this is a subject of grave import. A proper measure of the kind indicated will insure the success of these institutions in a way not otherwise possible, and will at the same time remove the necessity for lobbying on the part of those specially interested in the various State institutions.

A law providing for the establishment of a system of grain classification and inspection, and the regulation by a commis-

sion of the service and charges by elevator and warehouse operators. Our State is rapidly taking its place as a grain producer on an extensive scale. Legislation along this line is needed now and will be more acutely necessary in the future.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

A law providing for the division of the Bureau of Agriculture, Labor, Industry and Publicity into two departments. There has been no factor more potent than this department in the advancement of Montanas interests, but the very term itself implies too much, The Bureau is growing rapidly and it is becoming more and more apparent that the departments of labor and agriculture would each profit by a division. A commissioner peculiarly fitted for the work of the labor department is rarely equipped to direct the agriculture and publicity division with the highest degree of efficiency. On the other hand an expert agriculturist is not always competent for the labor branch. It seems to me that the department of labor might with propriety include the now separate departments of Mine Inspector, Coal Mine Inspector and Boiler Inspector. This would curtail the expense of clerk hire and of the printing of separate reports from these several departments, and bring about more unity and greater efficiency in the different branches of labor. So also does the work of the publicity department fit in with the agricultural work.

A law providing for the summary removal of officers who fail or refuse to perform their duties. In municipalities the Mayor is clothed with the power to summarily remove those who do not properly execute their duties. No such power is given the Governor, nor is it vested elsewhere. No reasonable objection can be urged in opposition to such a provision. Many reasons exist for such a law. There is absolutely no provision for emergencies under the State administration. The power of removal vested in the heads of municipalities has been conducive of much good and has seldom been abused.

A resolution submitting to the voters the question of amending the Constitution by striking from Section 2 of Article IX. thereof the word "male.'

The foregoing subjects of proposed legislation have been fully discussed by and with the people of the State. The one compelling reason for urging them here is the simple fact that

the people have expressed their wishes in the premises. I have not sought to outline the details of bills, having no desire to take legislative functions upon myself. All of the subjects contemplated can be covered by ordinary bills for laws or Constitutional amendments, and I recommend them to you for prompt consideration and action.

PANAMA-PACIFIC EXPOSITION.

Your attention is called to the importance of a proper participation by the State of Montana in the Panama-Pacific International Exposition to be held at San Francisco in 1915. The State should be represented within the means available.

The law now in force relative to the investment of the permanent school and university funds in farm mortgages has been found to be of little use. A law of broader scope will accomplish beneficial results in this particular.

The general use of gasoline engines in vehicles and farming and other machinery makes pertinent the suggestion that there should be a law establishing a standard quality of gasoline and other oil products offered for sale. The gasoline brought into the State at the present time is notoriously bad.

I recommend the passage of an automobile license law for this State. This law should take from municipalities the right to license and provide a general license system under State authority.

The different State officers have submitted detailed reports of the work of their respective departments. Many recommendations of merit are contained therein. You will have these reports before you for appropriate action on your part.

ENROLLED MILITIA.

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Complying with the provisions of Section 1049, Revised Codes of Montana of 1907, I have the honor to advise you that, according to the returns of the County Assessors of the several counties of the State, the number of able-bodied male citizens qualified for the performance of military duty is 45,052.

DISBURSEMENTS BY THE GOVERNOR.

In accordance with the provisions of the Constitution, I submit the following statement of the expenditure of all moneys belonging to the State and by the Governor paid out to the State Treasurer, for the biennial period ended November 30, 1912:

Five per cent, U S land sales in Montana	$ 65,995.12
U. S. forest sales in Montana	217,515.79
U. S. aid to Agricultural College	100,000.00
U. S. aid to Soldiers' Home	17,225.00
TOTAL	$400,735.91

CONCLUSION.

The length of this message has been curtailed in the hope that the strength of the recommendations may be correspondingly augmented. Later in the session such additional matters as may require consideration at the hands of the assembly will be communicated by special message.

This, my first official communication to your honorable body, is submitted not alone with a profound realization of the responsibility assumed with an oath of office, but as well with a sincere desire to co-operate with you in all things which contemplate the welfare, prosperity and happiness of Montana citizenship. I am possessed of a full measure of confidence in the membership of this body and I firmly believe that each member is beginning his duties imbued with a high resolve to so legislate as to promote the well-being of the commonwealth, and thereby afford to the people the amplest justification for the faith expressed by them at the polls last November.

S. V. STEWART,

Governor.

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